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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [MA](#) [MP](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)  
SUBJECT: EAC CONVENED TO REVIEW TRIPWIRES, DISCUSS RECENT  
TANA BOMBINGS AND MSG M4 USE

Classified By: RSO R.J. BENT FOR REASONS 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The Emergency Action Committee (EAC) convened on July 20, 2009 to review the current tripwires, specifically those for Civil Disorder/Armed Combat and the updated Health and Environment tripwires. This was especially timely in light of the weekend plot reported by local authorities to detonate multiple bombs at various law enforcement related and other strategic sights. Given the rising crime and recent violence in Madagascar, the EAC unanimously recommended to the Ambassador that the new Maine Security Guard (MSG) detachment to commence in the New Embassy Compound (NEC) be authorized to use the M4 weapon. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (S/NF) After having experienced the crisis in Madagascar and the subsequent ordered departure (OD), the EAC reviewed the current tripwires to ensure that they were sufficient and met Posts' needs. The EAC did not make any edits to the current tripwires for Civil Disorder/Armed Combat feeling that they had served us well previously and were tried and tested. In regards to the Health and Environment tripwires that were recommended by the Foreign Service Health Practitioner (FSHP) and the Regional Security Officer (RSO), the EAC members approved the current ones, but requested that another be added which states, "Request risk assessment of the situation from the Regional Medical Officer (RMO)". The EAC also wanted RSO to further investigate exactly who would determine when an epidemic had occurred.

¶3. (C) The Public Affairs Officer (PAO) reported that some media outlets were reporting that the absence of U.S. statement about the weekend bombings translated into support for the violence and noted that the French had publicly condemned the bombings. The EAC decided that issuing a press statement was premature as numerous previous statements expressed support for finding non-violent means of resolution and suggested that the embassy continue to maintain a low profile. Since March, there have been no direct threats lobbed at the U.S. Embassy or the American community. There was some recent grumbling when the media criticized the Ambassador for not inviting any members of the HAT (High Transitional Authority) to the July 4th event.

¶4. (C) The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), reporting on behalf of the POL/ECON section, noted that mediation between the various political parties and the HAT is still in play and the international community is still engaged in negotiations. The most prominent issue now is the future of U.S. African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which can not continue until there is clear progress toward a return of the rule of law and democratic governance in play. The loss of AGOA-related jobs could, in effect, translate into the loss of an estimated 100,000 jobs, which support perhaps a million people.

¶5. (C) The Defense AttachQ Officer (DAO) expressed that

within the military, there is currently a lot of grumbling about work related conditions, but it appears to be all talk with no indications that the discontent would culminate into any violence or coordinated activity against the regime. Later that day, the DAO planned to meet with the Regional Gendarme Commander, Colonel Richard Ravalomanana (no relation to the former president) in order to obtain more information about the weekend bombings.

¶6. (S/NF) The Regional Affairs Officer (RAO) also noted a feeling of discontent amongst some members of the security forces, but concurring with DAO, did not believe that there would be any form of organized revolt. RAO noted that over the last few weeks, their relationship with Malagasy counterparts has gone from hostile to neutral, but engaged. Members of the Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS) continue to indicate that there is no current threat against the U.S. or its' interests.

¶7. (C) The Management Officer expressed concern about a Force d'Intervention Speciale (FIS) checkpoint consisting of four vehicles, lights flashing, that he observed late at night July 20, near the embassy residential community. Other EAC members, including the RSO, noted that recently there have been an increasing number of FIS patrols and checkpoints. Note: FIS is a mixed intervention team comprised of members of the police, gendarme and military with the mission of restoring public order and cracking down on gangs). RSO later confirmed that after the weekend bombings, FIS was instructed to augment checkpoints and be a visible presence in the city.

¶8. (C) Although the exact details are still unclear, over the weekend, the government and security forces alleged there  
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were multiple bomb attempts targeted at security force installations and at the HAT president's radio station. Although the press is claiming that there were 20 homemade artisinal bombs discovered, they targeted only six government or regime-related sites including Viva Radio Station (owned by HAT President Rajoelina), Gendarme Camp Fort Duchesne, Gendarme Camp Ankadilalana, the Central Police Data Storage Building and the Commission Nationale Mixte d'Enquete (CNME) headquarters and the Urban Commune of Antananarivo.

¶9. (C) Only two of the six attempts resulted in casualties. The most severe of the events occurred at Viva Radio Station, located in the Tana Waterfront, approximately 2 miles away from the American residential area. At the Gendarme press conference it was announced that early Sunday morning (July 19) between 12-20 armed men scaled the walls of the compound with at least a few AK-47s (The "Gazetiko" claimed that the attackers also had other weapons and rocket launchers but this was not mentioned in the subsequent press conference) and killed either two or three of the station security guards. Allegedly, the attackers intended to place explosive devices inside the radio station, but their efforts were halted when five military assets assigned to the area heard the gunshots and responded to the area with gunfire. All of the attackers fled the area. The contract Local Guard Force Coordinator alerted RSO to the gunfire early Sunday morning as their office is located across the street from the Tana Waterfront. The second significant event occurred near the CMNE headquarters. It is reported that an explosion took place inside a Puegeot 104 and caused the bomber to loose his thumb (later confirmed by DAO who saw the evidence). Even after the first detonation, the car continued to advance in the direction of the CMNE. 50 meters later, a second bomb detonated and killed one of the men inside the car, severely injured the other two and the fourth man was not harmed and was arrested by the Gendarme soon after. During the interview and investigation of the fourth subject, Gendarme discovered a map of the Tana Waterfront and other maps in his pocket and connected the two incidents. According to RSO LEO contacts, the second bomb detonated when an occupant of the car received a phone call. RSO speculates that as the bombs were all to be remotely detonated by cell phone, the explosion occurred because the bombers did not have any sophisticated

knowledge of IEDs.

¶10. (C) Currently, the government is moving to arrest five prominent figures associated with ex-President Ravalomanana and the TIM Party. The suspect list includes: a minister, secretary general, a parliamentary deputy, and a highly ranked official from the Ministry of Budget and Finance. EAC members personally knew some of the suspects and clearly stated that none of them had the capacity to be terrorists. During a press conference, Commander Richard Ravalomanana declared that he believed there were about 6,000 artisinal bombs hidden around the city by these "terrorists" and only 48 have been recovered. RSO advised the EAC that these numbers seem incredible and EAC members concurred.

¶11. (S/NF) The RSO presented information about the M4's use and recommended that the future MSG Detachment be allowed to use this weapon. Additionally, RSO noted that every other MSG Detachment in Africa already uses the M4, with the exception of Kigali, who will receive their M4 inventory in the fall. The EAC unanimously decided to recommend to the Ambassador that U.S. Embassy Antananarivo also adopt M4 use by the MSG Detachment.

STROMAYER